

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A method of allowing a subscriber to monitor a caller's recording to a network-based voice messaging service, said method comprising:
 - detecting a call at a switch serving the subscriber;
 - routing the call from the switch to the network-based voice messaging service through a conference server, said conference server being in a packet-switched data network; and
 - conferencing a packet-switched telephony client into the call via the conference server, wherein said packet-switched telephony client is associated with the subscriber.
 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising checking a presence database to determine an availability for the subscriber on the packet-switched data network.
 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising receiving a registration message from the packet-switched telephony client, wherein said registration message includes the availability for the subscriber.
 4. The method of claim 1, further comprising placing a second call from the conference server to a telephony device according an instruction received from the packet-switched telephony client.
 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the telephony device is a telephone.
 6. The method of claim 4, further comprising removing the network-based voice messaging service from the call on the conference server according to the instruction received from the packet-switched telephony client.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein data packets transmitted from the packet-switched telephony client to the conference server do not include data representing audible speech.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein data packets transmitted from the conference server to the voice messaging server do not include data representing audible speech originating from the packet-switched telephony client.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising removing the network-based voice messaging service from the call on the conference server according to the instruction received from the packet-switched telephony client.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of routing the call from the switch to the network-based voice messaging service through a conference server comprises:

routing the call from the switch to a media gateway, wherein said media gateway is in the packet-switched data network;

sending a message from the first media gateway to a call agent, wherein said message includes at least a called party information, and wherein said call agent is in the packet-switched data network;

sending a message from the call agent to an application server, wherein said message includes at least a portion of the called party information, and wherein said application server is in the packet-switched data network;

sending an instruction message from the application server to the call agent, wherein said instruction message includes at least a portion of the called party information;

sending an allocation message from the call agent to the conference server,

allocating a conference resource on the conference server;

connecting the conference resource to the call; and
connecting a second call from the conference server to the network-based voice messaging service and connecting to the call.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the step of conferencing a packet-switched telephony client into the call comprises:

determining a network address for the packet-switched telephony client, said determination based at least in part on the called party information;
sending an invitation to the packet-switched telephony client, said invitation addressed to the network address;
providing the network address to the conference server; and
connecting a voice path from the conference resource to the packet-switch telephony client based on the network address.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the packet-switched data network is an IP network.

13. A method of allowing a subscriber to monitor a caller's recording to a network-based voice messaging service, said method comprising:

connecting the caller to the network-based voice messaging service via a media gateway and a conference server, wherein said media gateway interfaces a telephony network and an IP network and wherein said conference server is in communication with the IP network; and

connecting a packet telephony client to a communication path shared by the caller and the network-based voice messaging service, wherein said packet telephony client is in communication with the IP network.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the packet telephony client comprises a user interface adapted to receive call processing instructions from a subscriber and to send the call processing instructions to the conference server.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein when a subscriber registers an availability with the IP network, a presence database in communication with the conference server is updated with an address for the packet telephony client.

16. The method of claim 13, wherein the packet telephony client comprises a user interface adapted to receive call processing instructions from a subscriber and to send the call processing instructions to an application server, wherein said application server is in communication with the IP network.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein when the subscriber registers an availability with the IP network, a presence database in communication with the application server is updated with an address for the packet telephony client.

18. A system allowing a subscriber to monitor a caller's recording to a network-based voice messaging service, said system comprising:

a first switch serving a subscriber's telephone line;

a second switch serving the network-based voice messaging service;

a first media gateway adapted for voice communication with the first switch;

a second media gateway adapted for voice communication with the second switch;

a conference server adapted for voice communication with the first and second switches;

an application server comprising a presence database, said presence database comprising subscriber registration information; and

a packet telephony client adapted for voice communication with the conference server,
said packet telephony client associated with the subscriber,

wherein when a call from the caller to the subscriber is to be redirected to the network-based voice messaging service, the first switch sets up a voice path to the first media gateway and the first media gateway sends a first message to the application server, and wherein in response to the first message, the application server checks the presence database to identify the subscriber's registration information, and wherein the application server sends a second message to the conference server, said second message comprising registration information associated with the subscriber, and wherein in response to the second message, the conference server sets up a voice path to the first media gateway, the packet telephony client and the second media gateway, and wherein the second media gateway sets up a voice path to the voice messaging server.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein the packet telephony client comprises a user interface adapted to receive call processing instructions from the subscriber and to send the call processing instructions to the application server.

20. The system of claim 18, wherein the packet telephony client comprises a user interface adapted to receive call processing instructions from the subscriber and to send the call processing instructions to the conference server.

21. The system of claim 18, wherein when the subscriber registers an availability with the IP network, the presence database is updated with an address for the packet telephony client.

22. The system of claim 18, wherein the first switch and the second switch comprise the same switch.

23. The system of claim 18, wherein the inbound media gateway and the outbound media gateway comprise the same media gateway.

24. The system of claim 18, wherein when the application server receives a message from the packet telephony client, wherein said message includes an instruction to allow the subscriber to speak to the caller, the application server instructs the conference server to remove the voice path from the conference server to the network-based voice messaging server.

25. The system of claim 24, wherein the packet telephony client is adapted to transmit data packets comprising audible communications only after an instruction to answer the call is received on the packet telephony client.

26. The system of claim 24, wherein the conference server is adapted to transmit data packets comprising audible communications received from the packet telephony client only after the instruction to allow the subscriber to speak to the caller is received from the application server.

27. The system of claim 18, wherein when the application server receives a message from the packet telephony client, wherein said message includes an instruction to allow the subscriber to speak to the caller from a specified telephone, the application server instructs the conference server to remove the voice path from the conference server to the network-based voice messaging serve to set up a voice path from the conference server to the specified telephone.

28. A method of monitoring a caller's recording to a network-based voice messaging service, said method comprising:

receiving a call from the caller to the subscriber on a first switch, said call to be redirected to the network-based voice messaging service;

setting up a voice path from the first switch to a first media gateway;
sending a first message from the first media gateway to an application server;
checking a presence database on the application server to identify registration information associated with the subscriber;
sending a second message from the application server to the conference server, said second message comprising registration information associated with the subscriber;
setting up voice paths from the conference server to the first media gateway, a packet telephony client and a second media gateway; and
setting up a voice path from the second media gateway to the voice messaging server.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein the packet telephony client comprises a user interface adapted to receive call processing instructions from the subscriber and to send the call processing instructions to the application server.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein the packet telephony client comprises a user interface adapted to receive call processing instructions from the subscriber and to send the call processing instructions to the conference server.

31. The method of claim 28, wherein when the subscriber registers an availability with the IP network, the presence database is updated with an address for the packet telephony client.

32. The method of claim 28, wherein the step of sending a first message from the first media gateway to an application server comprises sending a first data message from the first media gateway to a call agent; and sending a second data message from the call agent to the application server, wherein said second data message includes at least a portion of the first data message.

33. The method of claim 28, wherein the step of sending a second message from the application server to the conference server comprises sending a first data message from the application server to a call agent; and sending a second data message from the call agent to the conference server, wherein said second data message includes at least a portion of the first data message.

34. A method allowing a subscriber to monitor a caller's recording to a voice messaging service, said voice messaging service being based in a telephony network, said method comprising:

routing the caller's call from the telephony network to an inbound media gateway, said inbound media gateway adapted to interface the telephony network with a packet-switched data network;

sending, in response to the call received at inbound media gateway, a first message from the inbound media gateway to a call agent, wherein first message including at least a called party number, and wherein said call agent is adapted to provide call processing instructions in the packet-switched data network;

sending a first instruction from the call agent to the conference server and the inbound media gateway to connect the call to a conference resource on the conference server;

sending a second instruction from the call agent to the conference server to connect a second call to the voice messaging service, said second call being routed through an outbound media gateway;

sending a second message from the call agent to an application server; said second message including at least the called party number;

sending, in response the second message, a third message from the application server to the call agent, said third message including at least a network address associated with the packet-switched telephony client; and

sending, in response to the third message, a third instruction from the call agent to the conference server to connect the conference resource to the packet-switched telephony client and a fourth message from the call agent to the packet telephony client, said fourth message including a notification related to the call.

35. The method of claim 34, wherein the inbound media gateway and the outbound media gateway comprise the same media gateway.

36. The method of claim 34, the packet-switched data network comprises an IP network.

37. The method of claim 34, packet-switched data network comprises the Internet.

38. A system allowing a subscriber to monitor a caller's recording to a voice messaging service based in a telephony network, said system comprising:

an inbound media gateway and an outbound media gateway, said media gateways adapted to interface voice calls between the telephony network and a packet-switched data network;

a call agent in the packet-switched data network adapted to provide call processing for voice calls transmitted via the packet-switched data network;

a conference server adapted to provide a conference call between the inbound and outbound media gateways and a packet-switched telephony client associated with the subscriber, said conference server and said packet-switched telephony client are in the packet-switched data network; and

an application server in the packet-switched data network, said application server adapted provide subscriber information to the call agent;

wherein when the caller's call is to be routed to the network-based voice messaging service by the telephony network, the call is connected to the inbound media gateway, and wherein in response to the call, the inbound media gateway sends a first message to the call agent, said first message including at least a called party number, and wherein the call agent instructs the conference server and the inbound media gateway to connect the call to a conference resource on the conference server, and wherein the call agent further instructs the conference server to connect a second call to the conference resource, said second call being routed through the outbound media gateway to the voice messaging service, and wherein the call agent sends a second message to the application server; said second message including at least the called party number, and wherein in response the second message, the application server sends a third message to the call agent, said third message including the subscriber information, and wherein in response to the third message, the call agent instructs the conference server to connect the conference resource to the packet-switched telephony client and the call agent sends a fourth message to the packet telephony client, said fourth message including a notification related to the call.

39. The system of claim 38, wherein the subscriber information includes at least a network address associated with the packet-switched telephony client.

40. The system of claim 38, wherein the packet-switched telephony client comprises a user interface adapted to receive instructions from the subscriber and to send the instructions to the call agent.

41. The system of claim 38, wherein the packet-switched telephony client comprises a user interface adapted to receive instructions from the subscriber and to send the instructions to the conference server.

42. The system of claim 38, wherein the packet-switched telephony client comprises a user interface adapted to receive instructions from the subscriber and to send the instructions to the application server.

43. The system of claim 38, wherein in response to the second message, the application server checks the presence database for the subscriber's availability on the packet-switched data network.

44. The system of claim 38, wherein an instruction to answer the call is sent from the packet-switched telephony client to the

45. The system of claim 38, further comprising a presence database in communication with the application server and the packet-switched telephony client, wherein said presence database is adapted to receive registration information from the packet-switched telephony client.

46. The system of claim 38, wherein the packet-switched data network comprises an Internet Protocol network.

47. A system allowing a subscriber to monitor a caller's recording to a voice messaging service in a telephony network, said system comprising:

means for connecting a call path from the caller to the voice messaging server, wherein said call path includes a media gateway, wherein said media gateway interfaces the telephony network to a packet-switched data network;

means for joining a conference server to the call path, wherein said conference server is in the packet-switched data network;

means for joining a telephony client system to the call path through the conference server, wherein said telephony client is in the packet-switched data network; and

means for preventing the caller from hearing voice transmission from the subscriber.

48. The system of claim 47, further comprising means for allowing the caller to hear voice transmission from the subscriber if the subscriber sends an instruction to answer the call.

49. The system of claim 48, further comprising means for dropping the voice messaging service.

50. The system of claim 47, further comprising means for joining a specified telephone to the call path through the conference server if the subscriber sends an instruction to answer the call, wherein said instruction identifies the specified telephone.

51. The system of claim 50, wherein the instruction further identifies a telephone number for the specified telephone.

52. A method of allowing a subscriber to monitor a caller's recording to a voice messaging service, said voice messaging server being in a circuit-switched telephony network, said method comprising:

detecting a call at a switch serving the subscriber;

routing the call from the switch to a media gateway, said media gateway adapted to provide an interface between the circuit-switched telephony network and a packet-switched data network;

checking a database for an availability of the subscriber on the packet-switched data network; and

establishing a conference call through a conference server, said conference server being in the packet-switched data network and said conference call connecting the caller's call from the media gateway to the network-based voice messaging service and connecting the caller's call to a packet-switched telephony client, if the subscriber is available on the packet-switched data network.

53. The method of claim 52, further comprising connecting the caller's call from the media gateway to the network-based voice messaging service, if the subscriber is not available on the packet-switched data network.

54. The method of claim 52, further comprising receiving a registration message from the packet-switched telephony client, wherein said registration message includes the availability for the subscriber.

55. The method of claim 52, further comprising extending the conference call to include to a telephony device according an instruction received from the packet-switched telephony client.

56. The method of claim 55, wherein the telephony device is a telephone.

57. The method of claim 56, further comprising removing the network-based voice messaging service from the conference call according to the instruction received from the packet-switched telephony client.

58. The method of claim 52, wherein when the conference call is connected between the caller's call, the voice messaging service and the packet telephony client, no voice

communication is passed from the packet telephony client to the voice messaging service or to the caller's call.

59. The method of claim 52, wherein when the conference call is connected between the caller's call, the voice messaging service and the packet telephony client, voice communication is passed from the packet telephony client to the voice messaging service or to the caller's call.

60. The method of claim 52, wherein when the conference call is connected between the caller's call, the voice messaging service and the packet telephony client, no voice communication is passed from the packet telephony client to the voice messaging service or to the caller's call only if a predetermined instruction is input to the packet telephony client.

61. The method of claim 52, further comprising removing the network-based voice messaging service from the conference call according to the instruction received from the packet-switched telephony client.

62. The method of claim 52, wherein the packet-switched data network is an IP network.

63. The method of claim 52, wherein the circuit-switched telephony network is a public switched telephone network.